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THE
IRISH ARGENTINE
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Irish Argentine Research Fund
Application Form

Name Clare Healy

Address Centre for the Study of Human Settlement and Historical Change

National University of Ireland, Galway, University Road

Galway, Ireland

Telephone +353-87-9312100 Fax N/A

E-mail address sielarence2@yahoo.co.uk

Are you a member of the IAHS? Yes

University or Institutional Affiliation (if any): **Please Specify Department.**

Department of History, National University of Ireland, Galway

Faculty Arts

Graduate Student: Ph.D.

Principal advisor or thesis director Dr. William O'Reilly

Independent Scholar N/A

Intended Product: Thesis

Date degree expected September 2005

Research topic (please include the time period being studied):

Irish Migration to Argentina: Interaction between African, Indigenous and Irish People in Buenos Aires, 1776-1892

ALL APPLICANTS: Please attach a curriculum vitae and a description of your project (up to 3 pages). There must be a clear relevance of your research within the Scope of Study of the Irish Argentine Historical Society, i.e., "the migration of people from Ireland to Argentina and other Latin American countries, their settlement, lives, and achievements, as well as those of their descendants, together with contemporary presence of Ireland and people of Irish ancestry in the life and culture of Argentina and other Latin American countries, and the presence of Argentines in Ireland."

UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE STUDENTS: Applications should include a letter of recommendation from principal faculty advisor (may be mailed separately).

How did you learn about this research grant opportunity? (Please be specific)

Through frequent use of the IAHS website and personal acquaintance with Edmundo Murray.

Proposed field trip: purpose, destination, dates of travel and proposed duration of stay (may be changed):

Archival and Secondary Research in the City of Buenos Aires, as well as research in the church and local archives of the Province of Buenos Aires.

Destination: Buenos Aires, 15 September - 15 December, 2004

Duration: Three months

Estimate of actual expenses; please provide details of air, automobile, bus, rail, or other expenses and local accommodations (please add an itemized budget):

Lufthansa Student Return Flight to Bs.As.: €610; Accommodation in City of Bs.As. for three months: €300; Photocopying and books: €100; Two trips to provincial Irish settlements (e.g.: Capilla del Señor, Carmen de Areco, Chascomús): €50; Transport within Bs.As.: €60. TOTAL: €1,120.

Amount of grant support requested €1,000 (please specify amount in Euros)

Signature

Clare Mealy

Date

25/05/2004

Mail application form and other documents to:

Irish Argentine Historical Society
Maison Rouge
1261 Burtigny
Switzerland
www.irishargentine.org

Detailed description of the project (up to 3 pages), including its relevance within the Society's Scope of Study.

Buenos Aires Province in the nineteenth century was inhabited by a diverse, and sometimes segregated, population of indigenous people, people of African descent, Creoles and immigrants. It was to this province in South America that many Irish people migrated throughout the century, in the context of British expansion. This migration is the subject of a PhD in History which I am currently researching, based at the National University of Ireland, Galway. I am in the second year of the PhD programme and hope to complete my thesis in September 2005.

My research trip to Buenos Aires in September of this year will form part of ongoing research at NUI Galway, Trinity College Library, the National Library and the National Archive in Dublin, the British Library and the PRO in London, and the State and University Library in Hamburg. The trip is aimed at examining primary material from city and church archives which relates to Irish immigration, British activity in the province, and to the indigenous and African inhabitants of Buenos Aires. I will also conduct a survey of secondary material in the holdings of the Biblioteca Nacional and the Biblioteca del Congreso de la Nación in the capital. This will build on research already undertaken on a previous trip to Buenos Aires from March to May 2003. During the last trip, I worked with material in the above libraries, as well as the library of *The Southern Cross* newspaper. I met with academics based in Buenos Aires working on diverse aspects of migration, members and descendants of the Irish-Argentine community and journalists at *The Southern Cross* and *The Buenos Aires Herald*.

Irish emigration to Argentina took place in the nineteenth century, during which time the Kingdom of Ireland was united with the Kingdom of Great Britain, under the terms of the Act of Union of 1800. The migration can therefore be seen as a movement of people from one region of the British Empire to an area where Britain was asserting commercial, and often even political influence. Consequently, I intend to research ties between Britain and Argentina at this time, from British activities in the Viceroyalty of the River Plate and the *invasiones inglesas* in 1806/07, to the Barings crisis in 1890, expanding on the work of historians such as H.S. Ferns and Andrew Graham-Yooll. In this way, it will be possible to place Irish migration to Argentina in the context of British expansion. I have already presented initial research on connections between Great Britain and the Viceroyalty of the River Plate in a paper given at the Harvard International Seminar on the History of the Atlantic World in Cambridge, England, in March of this year.

It is also my aim to develop my thesis into a nuanced picture of Irish immigrant life in the province of Buenos Aires; and as such I will examine divergent aspects of the migratory movement itself and of the nature of the *bonaerense* society into which they immigrated. Following from primary research conducted in Ireland on the origins of the migrants to Buenos Aires and the society which these migrants were departing from in the nineteenth century, I intend to conduct similar research on primary sources

in the federal capital and the towns of Buenos Aires Province to contextualise this information. This will enable me to locate these same migrants on arrival at the port and investigate their economic means, occupations, age, marital status, etc. I will then use church and local archives in areas of concentrated Irish settlement such as Chascomús, San Antonio de Areco, San Carmen de Areco, San Isidro, Luján, Pergamino and Venado Tuerto to examine their settlement patterns. By analysing these records, I will be able to establish how many of the intending migrants actually arrived, how many of them stayed on, and if so, for how long. I will investigate their economic development and the establishment of an Irish-Argentine community by studying contemporary newspapers and minutes from meetings of Irish Argentine societies. Burial records and wills will also form an important part of my primary material.

In order to broaden my research into the society which these immigrants lived in, I have already studied much secondary material on other European migrants to Argentina and their settlement in the province of Buenos Aires, such as the work of Fernando Devoto, José C. Moya and Tulio Halperín Donghi. To enhance this aspect of my research, I hope to also access primary material on Argentine immigration in general.

I intend to conduct research on the indigenous population of Buenos Aires province by analysing census data to determine where Irish immigrant settlements encroached on indigenous land. I will also examine memoirs and travel accounts of Buenos Aires to assess the extent of interaction between agricultural immigrants such as the Irish, and the indigenous inhabitants of the province, such as the Chaná-Timbú, the Charrúas, the Pampas Indians and the Ranqueles.

I will continue my research on the Afro-Argentines of Buenos Aires, and the extent to which European immigrants interacted with the approximately 30% of the population who were of West African descent in the early nineteenth century. Drawing on studies of race and its connection with culture and labour which have been carried out in the US by historians such as David Roediger, Theodore W. Allen and Noel Ignatiev, I will examine the significance of racial prejudice and segregation in Buenos Aires Province. In this context, it is also my intention to compare the experience of those of West African and those of Irish descent in the city and countryside of Buenos Aires, in terms of their strategies for survival, their integration into Creole society and their opportunities for social mobility. In order to achieve this, I will use census data, first-hand accounts, minutes from meetings of Afro-Argentine societies and *naciones*, as well as detailed examination of Afro-Argentine newspapers such as *La Broma*, *El Proletario* and *La Juventud*. On foot of research of these sources, and further examination of the Irish-Argentine/British newspapers *The Southern Cross* and *The Standard*, I will compose a detailed and potentially illuminating comparative analysis of the development of these two communities within *bonaerense* society at large.

This research trip will have a duration of three months, during which I will allocate my time as follows: I intend to spend three weeks working on published sources and newspapers in the Biblioteca Nacional, the Biblioteca del Congreso de la Nación, the Academia Nacional de la Historia and the library of the Centro de Estudios Migratorios Latinoamericanos. During this time, I hope to also work with sources in

the Ravignani Institute and the Faculty of Law at the University of Buenos Aires. I will then spend a further four weeks examining primary documents in the Archivo General de la Nación Argentina. This will include analysing census data, as well as port and shipping records. I will then make field trips to two towns of concentrated Irish settlement in the province of Buenos Aires to examine church and local archives. At present, it seems most useful to do case studies in Chascomús and San Carmen de Areco, but this may change, depending on the availability of records.

I also intend to contact researchers in indigenous studies at the Universidad Nacional del Centro de la Provincia de Buenos Aires at Tandil, with a view to conducting research there. The University in Tandil has extensive holdings of documents and monographs on indigenous history, which will be useful in my studies in this area. A certain number of British merchants who traded in the city of Buenos Aires in the nineteenth century have left collections of papers which are now in private hands, such as the Armstrong papers and the Burns diaries. I will attempt to gain access to these archives, as they may prove crucial in researching the British merchant community in the city.

My three-month research trip to Buenos Aires will enhance the primary source basis for my thesis, in that I will gain new knowledge of the nature of the migration itself and be able to compare it and connect it with information already acquired in the midland counties of Ireland and in County Wexford. It will also enable me to question existing studies on Irish migration to Argentina and establish a hitherto unresearched link between the various inhabitants of Buenos Aires Province, including the Irish. Primary research on the British community and British commercial activity will provide a novel insight on Irish migration history outside the British Empire but within its sphere of influence. Within Irish-Argentine studies itself, I wish to broaden its perspective to encompass not merely a local history of either Irish immigrants settling on the pampas of Buenos Aires Province, or of a localised exodus of Irish emigrants from the midlands, but rather to connect the two phenomena as a unified process. In doing such, I wish to locate the topic within the broader context of British and Spanish imperial history, Atlantic history and migration theory. Hence, it is my objective not to highlight the idiosyncrasies of a lesser-known and apparently exceptional migratory flow, but rather to examine and explain it within the wider context of mass European and African migration to the Americas during a century of transatlantic movement.